



REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES - ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTATION

11. ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The criteria adopted by the Heritage Council in November, 1996 have been used to determine the cultural heritage significance of the place.

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE

The building conveys an attractive sense of rhythm and formality although the projecting building masses at *Bishop's House* deviate from the simplicity and purity of form characteristic of the Georgian tradition. (Criterion 1.1)

Bishop's House, with its elegant Georgian lines, and surrounding lawns and gardens, is aesthetically pleasing and provides a visual oasis in an area of high rise office developments. (Criterion 1.3)

11.2. HISTORIC VALUE

Bishop's House is associated with the establishment and growth of Perth, and was an important and substantial landmark since 1859. (Criterion 2.1)

Bishop's House is closely associated with Bishop Mathew Blagden Hale, Perth's first Anglican Bishop. Bishop Hale was instrumental in establishing Western Australia's first high school for boys. (Criterion 2.3)

11.3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

11.4. SOCIAL VALUE

Bishop's House is highly significant through its religious associations as the residence of Anglican Bishops and Archbishops of Perth since 1859. (Criterion 4.1)

Bishop's House was a site of social activity for the Western Australian 'gentry'. (Criterion 4.1)

Bishop's House and gardens contribute to the Perth community's sense of place, being representative of an aspect of life in Perth at an earlier time. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12.1. RARITY

Bishop's House is one of a small number of Victorian Georgian style residences remaining in the City of Perth. (Criterion 5.1)

12.2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Bishop's House is representative of mid nineteenth century domestic architecture in Perth. The adoption of a style appropriate for the social standing of an archbishop continued the English tradition but departures from the purity of the Georgian form reflected adaptations to a new environment. (Criterion 6.2)

12.3 CONDITION

Bishop's House is in very good condition and well maintained. An intensive reconstruction programme was carried out in the mid 1980s upgrading the internal and external fabric and the standard of accommodation for residential use. Accretions to the original form were removed and the house was returned to the original form based on documentary evidence. Improvement of the landscaping to provide an appropriate environment for the building, was part of the reconstruction programme. The landscaping is also well maintained, receiving regular attention.

12.4 INTEGRITY

Although the reconstruction of *Bishop's House* and the current use as a private residence is compatible with the original intention, the associations with the Anglican church are no longer evident. *Bishop's House* thus has moderate integrity.

12.5 AUTHENTICITY

There have been substantial alterations to the fabric and form of *Bishop's House* since construction. Some of the original fabric, the timber shingles, verandah balustrades and entrance portico, were removed early this century. The house was enlarged considerably to accommodate the requirements of succeeding occupants but this fabric was removed during the reconstruction programme in the 1980s with the decision to return the house to the earliest form. At this time planning alterations were instituted to provide an appropriate living environment for the late twentieth century. Some of the contemporary detailing is more robust than the original and fails to capture the refinement of the original structure. *Bishop's House* thus has moderate authenticity.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentary evidence has been compiled by Irene Ham-Sauman, Historian. The physical evidence has been compiled by Katrina Chisholm, Graduate Architect.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Bishop's House is a two-storey residence constructed in Victorian Georgian Style, in 1859, for Mathew Blagden Hale, first Anglican Bishop of Western Australia.¹ *Bishop's House* is situated on land known as the Bishop's See, located between St George's Terrace, and Mount and Spring Streets at the western end of Perth City.

¹ Apperly, R., Irving, R. & Reynolds, P. *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture: Styles and terms from 1788 to the present* Sydney, Angus & Robertson, 1989, p.42-45.

Mathew Hale was educated at Cambridge and held various posts as a clergyman in England before he met Bishop Short, Bishop of Adelaide, who convinced him to come to Australia. They travelled to Adelaide in 1847, on the *Derwent*, and Bishop Short appointed Hale as his Archdeacon.

The diocese of Adelaide included all of Western Australia at this time. After reaching Adelaide, Bishop Short and Archdeacon Hale travelled to Perth, on the *Champion*, stopping at Albany and other places along the coast to hold services.² At the Vasse, in 1848, Mathew Hale met and married Sabina Dunlop Molloy, daughter of John and Georgiana Molloy, after a courtship of only a few days. Mathew Hale's first wife had died in England in 1845, leaving him with two young daughters.

After serving as Archdeacon of Adelaide, Hale took charge of the South Australian Aboriginal Mission in 1850, establishing an educational institution at Poonindie, near Port Lincoln. In 1856, he was appointed as the first Bishop of Perth and returned to Western Australia in that capacity.

In October 1856 he wrote to his family:

I have bought a beautiful piece of ground for our house at Perth. The situation is most lovely and there is excellent garden ground and a spring of water, which I believe runs all year...Our ground is as pretty as any in the place.³

Some of the land Bishop Hale bought was still bush, but on the lots purchased from Edward Hamersley there was a house and stables of white-washed bricks. In 1858, Bishop Hale arranged for the construction of *Bishop's House* by ticket-of-leave men.⁴ In December that year, Bishop Hale and his family travelled to England, not returning until April 1860. *Bishop's House*, which cost £2,486, was completed while they were away. In his diary Bishop Hale wrote:

We found our house quite ready to step into. Mr Mears and Ann had prepared everything. Everyone in town was aware that *Bishop's House* was ready even to the making of the beds.⁵

According to Maude Sanderson, daughter of Bishop Parry who succeeded Bishop Hale in 1876, the house already on the site was utilised as a kitchen, and the stables as laundry and kitchen outhouses.⁶

In 1860, Bishop Hale had a small cottage built adjacent to *Bishop's House* at a cost of £360.⁷ This was used as lodgings for visiting clergymen from the country. It was known as Clergy House or Bishop's Cottage.

Bishop Hale is said to have had three main areas of interest: care of the Aborigines, the spiritual welfare of the convicts, and a desire to provide higher education for the 'sons of the better class settlers'.⁸ He followed these interests during his time in Western Australia.

² Henn, Percy U. *The Perth Episcopate of Bishop Mathew Blagden Hale, 1857-1875: Compiled from his Letters and Diaries* Bound typescript, 1936, p.1-14.

³ *ibid*, p.17.

⁴ Williams, A. E. *West Anglican Way: The growth of the Anglican Church in Western Australia from its early beginnings* Perth, Province of Western Australia of the Anglican Church of Australia, 1989, p.188.

⁵ *ibid*.

⁶ Sanderson, Maude 'Personal Memories of *Bishop's House*, Perth, 1945' Typescript, Battye Library, HCWA File PD2093.

⁷ Williams, A. E. *op. cit.*, p.189.

⁸ Henn, Percy U. *op. cit.*, p.17.

In 1858, he set up the Bishop's Collegiate School for boys, in the Cloisters. The school suffered from lack of interest by the Western Australian community and cost Bishop Hale considerably to keep it running. The Collegiate School closed in 1872, but some people recognised the loss to the community and prevailed on the government to establish a secondary school to replace it.

Bishop Hale also attempted to establish a school for girls, run by the two Miss Sweetings, but this venture only survived a few months due to lack of enrolments.⁹

In 1872, Bishop Hale then built another house on the Bishop's See site, near the corner of Spring and Mount Streets, to house and educate Aboriginal children.¹⁰ This two-storey building was known as Hale House.

In 1875, Bishop Hale was appointed Bishop of Brisbane, and he handed all his Perth properties over to the Perth Diocese of the Anglican Church.¹¹

When Dean Gregg, Dean of Perth, wrote to the Archbishop of Canterbury requesting a new Bishop he wrote that 'there is an excellent *Bishop's House* with commodious stables and out-buildings, in the best situation in the city'.¹²

Bishop Henry Hutton Parry moved into *Bishop's House* in 1876, with his wife and two sons. His wife died the following year and, in 1879, he married Mary Alexander, widowed daughter of Sir Luke Leake. They had another five children, the youngest being Maude (Sanderson) born in 1884. Bishop Parry had no private means and found the upkeep of *Bishop's House* beyond him. In 1886, he moved his family into Bishop's Cottage and Judge Hensman leased *Bishop's House*.¹³ Bishop Parry extended Bishop's Cottage, adding a drawing room at one end and a kitchen at the other.¹⁴

In 1876, Bishop Parry established Bishop's Boys College, partly to provide religious instruction for boys attending the government high school, and partly to provide instruction for theological students. The College closed in 1879, and Bishop Parry joined with ministers of other denominations to pressure the government to allow a daily Scripture reading at the high school. From this, the churches gained the right to work in schools for half an hour a week.¹⁵ Bishop Parry also oversaw the construction of St George's Cathedral, begun in 1879 and completed in 1888.

The next Bishop to occupy *Bishop's House* was Charles Owen Leaver Riley who arrived to take up his post in 1895. *Bishop's House* was renovated and repaired for his occupancy.¹⁶

In 1904, Bishop Riley enlarged *Bishop's House* with funds from a public appeal within the Church.¹⁷ The hand-split sheoak shingles were replaced with terracotta tiles, and the small-scale lattice balustrading was replaced with

⁹ Burton, A. *Church Beginnings in the West* A. Burton, Canon of St George's, Perth, 1941, p.123.
¹⁰ Sanderson, Maude op. cit.; Map Compiled from Memory by Jesse E. Hammond in 1933 showing Perth 1871-2, Drawn by Malcolm Jones; Photograph 3858B Battye Library Photographic Collection, HCWA File PD2093.
¹¹ Williams, A. E. op. cit., p.189.
¹² Burton, A. op. cit., Letter dated 24/1/1876, p.92.
¹³ Sanderson, Maude op. cit.
¹⁴ ibid; Alexander, Fred. *Four Bishops and Their See: Perth, Western Australia 1857-1957* Perth, UWA Press, 1957, p.42.
¹⁵ Alexander, Fred. op. cit., p.35-36.
¹⁶ Williams, A. E. op. cit., p.190.
¹⁷ Alexander, Fred. op. cit., p.60.

vertical railings. Servants' quarters and a large kitchen were added, substantially altering the verandahs, and the brick porte cochere was demolished. According to Alexander, Bishop Riley 'was a skilled manual worker and employed much of his leisure time beautifying the home'.¹⁸

From 1914, to his death in 1929, Riley held the position of Archbishop of Perth. His successor was Henry Frewin Le Fanu. In 1930, renovations were carried out to *Bishop's House* for Le Fanu's occupancy. He was Archbishop from 1929 to 1946, and Primate of Australia from 1935.

Succeeding archbishops did not favour *Bishop's House* as their residence. In 1959, it was leased by Legacy as their Perth headquarters, and became known as Legacy House. The Perth Diocesan Trust was concerned that the Bishop's See site was losing money. In 1982, they leased the site to development company St George's Investments, later known as Australian City Properties (ACP), owned by Lord Alistair McAlpine. Part of the lease conditions was that *Bishop's House* and its gardens be restored and opened occasionally to the public.

In 1984 *Bishop's House* was renovated and restored by architects, Oldham Boas Ednie-Brown for ACP, and Lord McAlpine uses *Bishop's House* as his Perth residence. In May 1995, Blockless Investments BV took over ACP. These developers raised the possibility of shifting *Bishop's House* in order to better utilise the site.¹⁹ Early in 1999 Hawaiian Investments took over ACP. It is intended that *Bishop's House* remain in situ and be used as a residence and possibly for board meetings.²⁰

The gardens

During the first year of his occupancy of *Bishop's House*, Bishop Hale was 'much occupied in getting the garden in order: five men at work...necessary as the place looked very untidy and slovenly'.²¹

Bishop Hale planted ornamental trees in the front garden, and laid out the fruit garden at the rear. The fruit trees included apricot, peaches, guava, figs and pomegranates. Bishop Hale also had the garden wall constructed at the rear of the property. He planted willow trees, from slips from the trees at Napoleon's tomb on St Helena. These were transported on sailing ships which called at St Helena for water. The willow trees at the time of the garden's establishment are located on the western side of Spring Street behind the brewery. The willow trees remaining in Bishop's Gardens appear to date from later periods.²²

The spring, from which Spring Street gets its name, flowed through the orchard and under the road, to what was then the Stanley Brewery. Indian bamboo grew along the Spring Street boundary, and paperbarks and rushes grew at the bottom of the garden where the Swan River originally flowed.

18 *ibid*, p.76.

19 'Future of Bishop's See hinges on PCC approval' *The West Australian* Wednesday 19 March 1997, p.64, HCWA File PD2093.

20 Australian City Properties (ACP) still exists as a company with Hawaiian Investments being the major shareholder of the company. (Phone call to Hawaiian Investments 14/2/00)

21 Henn, Percy U. *op. cit.*, Diary entry, 20 April 1861.

22 'Bishop's See Conservation Plan.' Hocking Planning & Architecture. Nov 1999. p 31.

Dean Gregg wrote, in 1876, that there was 'a good garden well stocked with fruit trees and vines, and the grounds generally are tastefully laid out with ornamental trees'.²³

Bishop Riley planted oak trees during his tenancy, two of which are said to survive.

As part of the refurbishment, the lawns at the front of *Bishop's House* have been replaced with a parterre garden, an ornamental arrangement of flowerbeds of different shapes and sizes. This garden includes an ornamental watercourse. A smaller parterre garden already exists in the grounds at the rear of *Bishop's House*.²⁴

The site

The land comprising the Bishop's See consists of Perth Town Lots L24, L24¹/₂, L25, L26, L26¹/₄, L26¹/₂ and L26³/₄.²⁵ These lots were granted to various people in the early days of the colony. Alfred Hillman acquired L24 and L24¹/₂; George Leake L25; William Milligan L26; Edward Hamersley L26¹/₄, and Lawrence Welch L26¹/₂.²⁶ Edward Hamersley increased his holdings in the site when he purchased L25 from George Leake in 1839, and L26 from William Milligan in 1841.²⁷

Bishop Hale acquired the site in various transactions between 1856 and 1863. He purchased Perth Town Lots L25, L26 and L26¹/₄ from Edward Hamersley (plus lot H5) for £900, and L24 and L24¹/₂ from Alfred Hillman for £300. Both purchases were registered 4 November 1856.²⁸ In 1858, Bishop Hale bought L26¹/₂ from Lawrence Welch for £50.²⁹ At the time, L26¹/₂ was a triangular piece of land surrounded by Spring, Milligan and Mount Streets, hence the relatively low price.

In 1863, the section of Milligan Street which ran between Spring and Mount Streets, and separated L26¹/₂ from the rest of the Bishop's See site, was rezoned Perth Town Lot L26³/₄ and granted to Bishop Hale.³⁰ The Bishop's See site as we know it was now complete.³¹

The Perth Diocesan Trust has constructed other properties, for rental, on the site. These include Bishop's Grove (1891/92) later known as Cardigan House, Bishop's Court (1935), later known as Bishop's Grove, and St George's Mansions (possibly c.1930s).³²

²³ Burton, A. op. cit., Letter dated 24/1/1876, p.92.

²⁴ 'Site as Existing'. Plans by Oldham Boas Ednie-Brown, Architects. April 1995., HCWA File PD2093.

²⁵ 'Recommendation to prepare a minor town planning scheme - 235-239 St George's Terrace, Perth' City of Perth Council, 3 January 1996.

²⁶ DOLA Deeds Registry, Index to Town Allotments, Vol. 1. Microfilm ACC1803/Item 3, Battye Library.

²⁷ DOLA Deeds of Memorial Vol 1, Memorial 899, 18 Nov 1839; Vol. 2, Memorial 132, 24 March 1841, Microfilm ACC1800, Battye Library.

²⁸ *ibid*, Vol. 6, Memorials 90 and 91, 4 November 1856.

²⁹ *ibid*, Vol. 6, Memorial 402, 29 March 1858.

³⁰ Description Books for Land Grants. Perth Book No. 511. 1849-1865, Microfilm Battye Library.

³¹ Maps of Perth Townsite, 1843-1872, HCWA File PD2093.

³² Information supplied by Ken Musto of Oldham, Boas, Ednie-Brown, Architects, HCWA File PD2093.

Bishop's Grove (1891/92) consisted of three, two-storey terrace houses, and is the work of (later) Sir J. J. Talbot Hobbs.³³ It was significantly altered over the years, with additions of another 26 rooms in 1939, at which time it was renamed Cardigan House. In 1986, it was refurbished and restored for ACP by architects Oldham, Boas Ednie-Brown. This building is now known as St George's House.

Bishop's Court was a two-storey brick apartment block fronting St George's Terrace and designed by Hobbs Forbes and Partners in 1935. This type of development was consistent with the post Depression trend towards more inner city living in Perth, based on concepts derived from contemporary European trends and in the style of Art Deco and 'Style Moderne'.³⁴ It was demolished to make way for the first-stage tower development on the Bishop's See site. Also demolished was St George's Mansions, an apartment building on the corner of Spring and Mount Streets. Carparks now occupy this area.³⁵

Plans for the development of the rest of the Bishop's See site are ongoing and subject to change.³⁶ A Minor Town Planning Scheme was gazetted for the site on 12 September 1997.³⁷

13. 2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Bishop's House is located at the corner of Spring Street and Mounts Bay Road at the western end of the central business district of Perth. The house is set well back from the street frontages and is obscured from public view by limestone walls on the street boundaries and extensively landscaped gardens. The site is overshadowed by commercial office towers to the north and east.

The two-storey residence has a simple rectangular form and is constructed in load bearing brick with a hipped, terracotta tiled roof in the Victorian Georgian Style.³⁸ The regularity of the rectangular form is interrupted by the three-sided bay window which projects from the south elevation at ground and first floors. *Bishop's House* was the first house in Perth to provide an example of the breaking away from the purely Georgian form, a fashion that began in England in the mid-eighteenth century.³⁹ On the north elevation, an arched entrance portico and a protruding stairwell are also exceptions to the regular, rectangular form. Four brick chimneys rising above the hipped roof are visible from ground level. The stack in the north-east corner is topped with chimney pots.

As the site falls steeply towards the river to the south, a basement level is accommodated under the southern half of the house. A timber verandah with a lattice balustrade between timber posts supporting the verandah roof, encircles the building at the ground floor, forming a balcony on the south

33 *ibid*; Photograph 2969B/4, 1894, Battye Library Photographic Collection.

34 'Bishop's See Conservation Plan.' Hocking Planning & Architecture. Nov 1999. p 34.

35 Site prior to development, Drawing, Oldham, Boas, Ednie-Brown, Architects; Site as existing. Plan, Oldham, Boas, Ednie-Brown, Architects, April 1995., HCWA File PD2093.

36 'Recommendation to prepare a minor town planning scheme' op. cit.

37 'Bishop's See Conservation Plan.' Hocking Planning & Architecture. Nov 1999. p 28.

38 Apperly, R. Irving, R., Reynolds, P. op. cit., pp.42-45.

39 Pitt Morison, M. & White, J., eds. *Western Towns and Buildings* University of Western Australia Press, Nedlands, 1979, p.190. 'In the mid-eighteenth century Robert Taylor began the fashion of adding bay windows to the basic Georgian form ..."Bishop[sic] House" in Perth (1859) shows the first of these influences in what would otherwise be a purely Georgian-type house.'

elevation over the basement verandah. Timber stairs, located on the east elevation, give access to the garden.

The brickwork is predominantly fairfaced and laid in English bond with a stucco plinth at the base of the walls of the ground floor and stucco bands beneath the first floor window sill level and the roof line. There is also some stucco work applied to the brick chimneys. Flat arch, tuck-pointed brick lintels are evident above external door and window openings. These have generally been tuck-pointed. French doors with internal folding, timber panelled shutters built into the window reveals, open onto the verandah on the south and east elevations, at ground floor level. The sash windows are of timber construction and divided into twelve small panes with narrow glazing bars. 'Blind windows' have been incorporated into the composition in the upper floors of the north and east elevations. These brick window recesses are evident in early photographs of the house and are a compositional device to respect the rhythm of the facade. Timber lintels remain in the brickwork beneath the current verandah roof and may be evidence of the former verandah roof construction.

A brick paved driveway from Mounts Bay Road to the north yard, along the east boundary forms the main entrance and arrival point at the house since its reconstruction in 1984. The entrance portico leads to a gallery along the centre of the north wall, linking the drawing room to the east, with the stairwell/entry hall to the upper floor. A narrow staircase under the main stair leads to the basement. The hall runs across the width of the house opening onto the north and south verandahs and provides access to the kitchen and dining room. A powder room is located in the north-west corner of the ground floor.

The plan form is repeated at the upper level, with ensuite bathrooms located in the northern corners and a guest and master bedroom with an attached dressing room/study forming the accommodation in the main spaces.

Internal finishes are similar on both floors with timber floors and plastered walls and ceilings. The butt jointed floors incorporate timber, ventilation grilles and feature high skirtings. Lead trays and latticed timber grating, have been installed under sanitary fittings in the bathrooms. The ceilings feature a large, coved cornice in the main rooms of the ground floor, whilst the entrance gallery and upper floor hall are partitioned with dark, timber battens. Ceiling fans have been suspended from the ceilings. All ceilings throughout the house were replaced in 1984.⁴⁰ The main staircase is constructed of cedar with decorative turned balusters and newel post. Basement rooms provide staff and storage accommodation and are noticeably less opulent than the upper floors with low ceilings and plasterboard linings to walls.

There have been substantial alterations to the form and fabric of *Bishop's House* since initial construction. The current building closely resembles the original form of the house, having undergone a period of reconstruction in 1984. A report from the architects, Oldham Boas Ednie-Brown, outlines the changes at this time.

Prior to this, the house and associated buildings on the site had been altered to accommodate the changing requirements of successive Bishops and their families and the leasehold period of Legacy. Documentary evidence indicates that the house was substantially enlarged when Bishop Riley occupied the

⁴⁰ 'Bishop's See Conservation Plan.' Hocking Planning & Architecture. Nov 1999. p 39.
Register of Heritage Places - Assessment Doc'n **Bishop's House**
05/01/2001

place. Photographs at around that time show that the main roof and verandah roof were originally covered with shingles.⁴¹ These were replaced with terracotta tiles in 1904.⁴² Changes were also made to the verandah with vertical balusters replacing the lattice balustrade and a set of stairs incorporated into the balcony of the south elevation. The entrance portico was substantially altered, eventually becoming engulfed by a single storey addition to the north elevation. There were also considerable extensions to the western end of the house. These accretions were removed in the most recent alteration period with the decision to recover the earliest known form of the house.

The house is in very good condition and well maintained, despite sporadic occupation. Some of the external surface treatment to the basement walls is deteriorating.

13.3 REFERENCES

No key references.

13.4 FURTHER RESEARCH

⁴¹ References to Bishop's House in Pitt Morison, M. & White, J. , eds. *Western Towns and Buildings*. University of Western Australia Press, Nedlands, 1979, p.192 and Molyneux, *Looking Around Perth . A Guide to the Architecture of Perth and Surrounding Towns*, Wescolour Press, East Fremantle, 1981, p.8. state that the verandahs were a later addition to the earliest house form. It has not been possible to verify this information.

⁴² 'Bishop's See Conservation Plan.' Hocking Planning & Architecture. Nov 1999. p 39.